

Message Text

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42

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4241

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 4959

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT ET

SUBJ: CONFLICT IN THE DIRG

REFS: ADDIS 4890 AND PREVIOUS

1. WE HAVE NOW ESTABLISHED TO OUR SATISFACTION THAT LT.COL. NEGUSSIE HAILE AND AT LEAST THREE OTHER MEN (SOME SAY UP TO NINE) WERE PLACED UNDER MAXIMUM SECURITY DETENTION ON THE PREMISES OF PUBLIC SECURITY ON APRIL 22. WE ARE ALSO CONVINCED THAT SOME 16 OTHER INDIVIDUALS IN THE INTELLIGENCE/PUBLIC SECURITY STAFF SERVING THE DIRG WERE DETAINED AND THEN APPARENTLY RELEASED.

2. REPORTS REACHING US TODAY FROM VARYING SOURCES, SOME OF WHICH ARE OF UNKNOWN RELIABILITY WHILE OTHERS HAVE PROVED RELIABLE IN THE PAST, TEND TO FALL INTO TWO MAJOR CATEGORIES. ONE SET ASSERTS THAT NEGUSSIE HAILE AND COMPANY WERE PLOTTING TO UNDO THE DIRG, RELEASE THE EMPEROR AND RECAST THE LAND REFORM

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PROCLAMATION TO PERMIT PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF A LIMITED ACREAGE.

THE OTHER ASSERTS THAT THESE MEN WERE TAKEN BECAUSE THEY WERE INEFFECTIVE AND/OR INVOLVED IN "CORRUPT PRACTICES" WITH RESPECT NOTABLY TO THE ASSETS OF INDIVIDUALS EXECUTED ON NOVEMBER 23 LAST OR STILL DETAINED. REPORTS IN THE FIRST CATEGORY ALSO STATE THAT THE PLOTTERS WERE DRAWING ON SUPPORT FROM THE GROUP OF ETHIOPIAN CONGO VETERANS AND OTHER MILITARY ELEMENTS PREPARED TO JOIN THEM INTER ALIA BECAUSE OF ALLEGED PEREMPTORY EXECUTIONS OF SERVICEMEN "WITHOUT JUSTIFICATION", PARTICULARLY LAST MONTH.

3. IN BOTH SETS OF REPORTS ARE INCLUDED ASSERTIONS -- AGAIN FROM SOURCES OF UNKNOWN RELIABILITY AS WELL AS SOURCES WHICH HAVE BEEN RELIABLE IN THE PAST -- THAT NEGUSSIE AND HIS FELLOW PRISONERS WERE DONE AWAY WITH THE EVENING OF APRIL 24. WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT A RELIABLE SOURCE ASSERTS THAT THE DIRG IS STILL DEBATING THEIR FATE AND THAT THEY REMAIN IN DETENTION.

4. WE ALSO HEAR ONCE AGAIN IN CONNECTION WITH THE FOREGOING THE INSISTENT ASSERTION THAT VARIOUS UNITS, PARTICULARLY THE AIR FORCE, HAVE WITHDRAWN THEIR REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DIRG AND THAT OTHER DIRG MEMBERS ARE, PERHAPS TEMPORARILY, STANDING DOWN. AS THIS IS BEING DRAFTED THERE IS, MOREOVER, AN EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN COURSE, WHICH WAS CONVENED AT SHORT NOTICE.

5. THE CITY CONTINUES TO PRESENT A PICTURE OF NORMALCY, ALTHOUGH SPECULATION ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IS THE DOMINANT SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION OF OUR ETHIOPIAN CONTACTS. WE ARE STILL VERY UNCERTAIN ABOUT THE ACTUAL COURSE OF EVENTS BUT NOTE THE EXISTENCE OF A STATE OF CONFLICT WITHIN THE DIRG WHICH, FOR THE FIRST TIME, HAS LED TO THE ARREST OF SEVERAL MEMBERS ON WHAT APPEARS TO BE VERY SERIOUS CHARGES.
HUMMEL

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